

AN

ANTIDOTE

TO THE

THEORIES

OF

THE NON-CONTAGIONISTS,

RESPECTING

THE PLAGUE.

By AN OLD LEVANTER.

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AN

ANTIDOTE, &c.

WHEN the flights of the theorist tend to the ruin of a whole nation, it is time to put that nation on its guard.

Theorists, in general, have a sort of mania, which, though not in all, yet in many, approximates to insanity. This we have seen in Johanna Southcote, who turned the heads of many, with regard to religion; and now Dr. M'Lean, with a more dangerous doctrine, attempts to delude the people of England into a belief, that plague is not contagious. The theorist espouses a supposition, and is led by a fondness for the child of his imagination, to support his system, contrary to every species of fact, which experience can bring before him.

The bubble burst with the disciples of Johanna Southcote when she died : we trust in God, and

the wisdom of His Majesty's ministers, that the bubble of Dr. M'Lean may not burst over the realm in a hot and tremendous plague, brought into the country through his dangerous assumptions. The people of England are considered a thinking people; but there are none more readily led astray by a new doctrine than they are. In this instance however, where the health of the nation, nay, we may say of Europe, is the stake to be played for, it is to be hoped they will reflect, and be on their guard; nor permit themselves to be deluded by unsupported assertions, which inculcate belief in a theory both without foundation and of the most dangerous tendency; and will oppose to it, the experience of ages, the undoubted facts which are extant, and the innumerable and well authenticated cases which have been adduced by authors of talent and veracity, who have written on the subject.

In a lecture which Dr. M'Lean delivered to the people of Liverpool in October last, and, which was afterwards published, he relates what happened to himself in the Pest-hospital, near the seven towers, at Constantinople, in the year 1815. "There were about twenty of us" we presume assistants, "in the hospital, all in close communication with the sick, one only was affected with the malady; this person was myself. The only difference between us, in our relations with the sick, was, that

those who remained in health, all lived and slept amongst them, whilst I occupied a distant part of the building, visiting them once every two hours throughout the day. The proof is here complete. It is as nineteen to one against the existence of contagion in plague." Here we take the liberty to call in question this complete proof of the Doctor. For he does not remember, or does not state, a truth which he must have known, and which is known to every one versant in such matters, namely, that the attendants in Pest-hospitals are uniformly people who have had the plague, and consider themselves not liable to take it again; and though it may not infallibly be the case, yet it is a rare thing for a spestate, as they are called, to take the disease again. When the plague was known to be at Malta, numbers of Levanteens, Turks, Jews, and Greeks, came to offer their services, and were employed in the Pest-hospitals, and other duties required by the circumstances of the times. Not a single instance of attack occurred, on any of these; but the convicts and other jail birds, who chose to purchase their freedom by the exposure of their lives, died in great numbers. Tully on this head says, that of twelve persons employed as Expurgators, and hospital attendants, at Corfu, ten of the number had the plague at Malta, nearly three years prior, whilst the remaining two had suffered from the disease about four years previously at Constantinople; further, that he em-

ployed four soldiers, from De Rolle's regiment, who had been attacked with the plague at Corfu, as orderlies at Cefalonia; and though the duties of all had been alike extended, these persons continued throughout the plague perfectly free from disease. There were also amongst the Expurgators and persons employed in removing the sick and burying the dead at Cefalonia, several who had the plague years before at Smyrna, and in other parts of the Levant; and such was the confidence of the whole of them in their immunity from the disease, that they could not be prevailed on to have recourse to the smallest precaution whatever. One and all escaped. It is deserving of notice that the only individual amongst the corps of Expurgators sent from Malta, who had not had the plague, one Filippo Pompio, early fell a victim to it at Corfu.

We therefore presume to argue, that the reasonings of the Doctor in this instance, go more strongly to prove contagion than to disprove it; for he, the only one in the hospital liable to take the disease, took it.

In attempting to fortify his theory, and to stagger the belief, that his illness proceeded from contact, we are told that the apartments of the Doctor, opened to the north east, and that the north east wind was a noxious one, also that he was new in the country.

But the north east wind is one of the most healthy at Constantinople, and seasoning fevers were never heard of in the country.—Under similar circumstances, he says, of exposure, anxiety, and privation, sickness, in respect to himself, would have resulted in any climate, and what was the nature of the attack? it was neither more nor less than a fever, and treated successfully as such, which did not at any period excite apprehension, and was never in his opinion of doubtful issue. This fact, he says, is a direct, an appropriate, and alone a sufficient proof of the non-existence of contagion in plague, which proof is, that he the only one in twenty, liable to take infection by contact, did take it, and escaped as thousands had before, though millions have fallen victims. Now we unequivocally deny that plague is a fever, though we admit that fever almost invariably accompanies plague.

What the Doctor saw of the plague in a few weeks at Constantinople, was sufficient to satisfy him, and give a degree of plausibility and colouring to his assumptions; so he left the country to disseminate his pestilential doctrines, not quite satisfied we believe, but that a second attack might take place and destroy both theory and theorist. On the candour of this proceeding he leaves the public to form their own judgment. So do we.

The plagues which have visited both Malta

and the Ionian Islands, since these possessions have been in the hands of the British Government, have furnished an abundance of cases, collected by men of talent and unsuspected veracity, men unbiassed by the theory of non-contagion, and uninfluenced by the Pacha of Egypt, or his agents—proofs sufficient to convince every unprejudiced and sound mind, that plague is not only contagious, but of the worst species of contagion; and that every prudent precaution ought to be taken, to keep it out of a country; and to eradicate it when it has unfortunately got in.

The Doctor mentions the fact of people wearing the clothes of those who have recently died of the plague, without taking the disease; of the commencement and cessation of the plague, in an epidemic form at certain determined periods; and of the total exemption from plague in certain countries.

Plague is one of those extraordinary and subtle maladies, which up to the present day, has baffled the researches of the most scientific sages. What has been effectual in one instance, has failed in another, and what has taken place to day, to-morrow we find diametrically opposite; so that no data can be fixed, nor rule followed, with any degree of certainty. One rule only is certain, and the experience of ages has proved its

efficacy, that is quarantine, and abstinence from contact with infected persons and goods.

It is a fact which often occurs in Mahomedan countries, where they are predestinarians, that the effects of those who die of the plague are worn immediately without fear by their nearest relations, and this too without disease following. We remember an instance of this in the Surbagee, who was chief guide of our troops in Egypt, who took refuge in Malta, and who, if still alive, enjoys a pension from his Majesty's Government. He had a brother who died of plague in his arms in Egypt, the day following he dressed in the clothes of the deceased and took no harm from it, but we hear not of the thousands who have fallen victims to their superstition, and temerity. We have also many instances of plague getting into a family, where only a part have taken the disease, and others have escaped.

Maddalina Attard, a young woman of seventeen years of age, residing at Bercacara, during the contagion at Malta in 1813, not only nursed her Father, Mother, and two Brothers, from the moment the malady showed itself on them, until they all died, but afterwards carried them in her arms from the house to the dead cart for burial, and never had the slightest symptom of infection. She was afterwards removed from the place where she had experienced such scenes of horror, and wretched-

ness, and performed her quarantine, commiserated by all who had witnessed her extraordinary filial affection.

Another case took place at Zante, on board of the *St. Spiridione*, in 1819, mentioned by Mr. Thomas, President of the board of health at that Island, where one man only escaped without attack, and where the guardian or expurgator, and seven of the crew fell victims.

But what does all this prove? only that the human system is not at all times equally disposed to absorb infection. We have also many instances where those who had the providence to escape at one time have been caught at another.

It is a vulgar prejudice in plague countries, that the malady stops in the heat of summer, and depth of winter. The honor is given to St. John on the 24th of June; but more recent experience has shewn that even the saints have little influence over this dire enemy of the human race. The plague raged at Malta during the heat of summer, as well as in the depth of winter; and at Constantinople, only a few years ago, the deaths were to the number of 2000 per day, when the snow was lying a foot deep all over the city.

There may exist something in the climates of countries, differing to such a degree as to ren-

der them more or less susceptible at one time than another, to infection: yet it would be a dangerous experiment to hazard the introduction of plague into a country which has never had it, just to see how far it was liable.

What that country is, or where that climate is to be found, which is proof against infection, no one can tell, for we have on record, that the plague has visited every degree of latitude, from the Cape of Good Hope to the regions of Norway; and though centuries have elapsed since they have been visited by it, yet it does not follow that the risk is to be run, for the adoption of Dr. M'Lean's theory, nor for the introduction of Egyptian cottons, without proper quarantine.

Great Britain has had the plague more than once, though the Doctor pretends to doubt it; but because he advances a dangerous and unsupported assertion, the fact is not the less to be believed?

The Doctor branches off his subject into two heads, Bills of Health, Quarantine and Lazaretti; being the means employed in the United Kingdoms to prevent the importation of what he calls "supposed contagion by pestilence."

On the subject of Bills of Health, the public, we

conceive, are indebted to him, for what he has brought forward. He shows clearly, that a ship, with a clean bill of health, may have a foul or contaminated cargo ; and, *vice versa*, that a ship with a foul bill, may have a clean, or what is considered an uncontaminated cargo. He quotes also the evidence of Mr. Briggs, the Agent of the Pacha of Egypt, given before the Committee of the House of Commons in 1824, (which we shall mention in its place), which shows that no ship from Alexandria ought ever to have a clean bill of health ; or more correctly, that ships from Egypt ought never to be considered as bringing clean bills of health.

“ The bills of health,” says the Doctor, or “ the foundation of these documents, is altogether so uncertain, depending on the interest or caprice of those who usually report to the Foreign Consuls the state of the public health as to pestilence, that no reliance whatever can be placed on their authenticity.”

We perfectly agree with the Doctor in what he says on this subject, and it cannot too soon be taken up by the whole of the sanitary establishments of Europe, more particularly as regards those from Egypt, where it is the interest of an absolute Pacha, the monopolist of all the produce of the Vice Royalty, to make his Arguzins sail with clean bills of health.

Dr. M'Lean favours us with extracts from the evidence given by the superintendants of the health department in England and Ireland ; also of several medical gentlemen before the Committee of the House of Commons. For these, we hesitate not to say, that the public of England in particular, and of all Europe in general, are under the most unqualified obligations to him. We at least had never seen this evidence, which we consider to be of the most alarming nature ; calculated to arouse the people of England to a sense of their danger, and all Europe in holding communication with a people so fool hardy and so dreadfully exposed.

Mr. Saunders, Superintendant at Stangate Creek, gave the following evidence before the Committee, relative to the practice at his station. Question : —“ Are there any of the first class of goods ever left without the probationary airings ? Yes.—Is it not as necessary that the whole should be aired as any part ? So it would appear ; but in the last case, we had within these few days, of a ship from Alexandria, with 1000 bales of cotton, it would have been impossible to air these within fifteen days upon deck. Imperfect airing is not peculiar to the case of cottons from Alexandria, but is common to all goods with clean bills of health ; and I have shown, that in point of safety, there can be no difference between clean and foul bills of health.” Mr. Saunders is again asked,—“ The bales of

cotton are cut open? They are.—And the cotton is aired upon the deck? Yes: the cotton is ripped open from one end to the other, and some of the interior removed.—Is the whole of the interior of the cotton open to the air? Not with a clean bill of health!!!” The Doctor proceeds to say, “it will scarcely be contended, by the advocates of pestilential contagion, that our Irish neighbours are less susceptible than ourselves in respect to that supposed virus; but let us see what is the practice at the quarantine station in Ireland. Mr. James M’Neil, Superintendant of Quarantine, at Carlingford, in reply to some questions from the Committee, states, that “there is no floating lazaretto, nor any lazaretto on shore, at Carlingford. There is no other place for airing goods than the deck of the vessel in which they come. In the last three years there have been forty-two vessels. They never do more than hoist their bags upon deck, as many as they can get at near the hatches. There is no means of examining or airing the cargoes with a foul bill of health. Believes the bags never have been opened, the Captains have always stated to him that it was impossible to do it. Has never heard of any sickness at Carlingford. There have been arrivals from Smyrna, and he believes with hides and skins from Africa. There is no physician within ten or twelve miles. Vessels, with foul bills of health, he understands, have repeatedly arrived at Carlingford. In point

of fact, a bale of cotton is not opened at any time. There has sometimes been much cotton and rags." Hence, it is evident, says Dr. M'Lean, that in Ireland, cotton is sent into circulation amongst the manufacturers, without ever having been aired or opened.

We are next favoured with the evidence of Mr. Briggs, Agent, we believe, to the Pacha of Egypt, in England, by which further light is thrown on the subject. He is asked by the Committee,—“What interval is there between the packing of the cotton and shipping it?—That is very uncertain; it may be a month, or it may be six months: but as soon as the crop is brought in, it is packed in the neighbourhood of Cairo, and brought down to the Nile.—Then it is possible, that, at the time of packing the cotton, there may be a plague in the country, and at the time of shipping it there may be none; in that case, would the ship exporting the cotton bring a clean or foul bill of health?—Forty days after the last case of plague has occurred, vessels are entitled to clean bills of health.”

Here, then, proceeds the non-contagionist, we have a confirmation of the case, of cotton packed in one of the principal seats of plague, and at a period of pestilence, according to the received doctrine, saturated of course with contagion, shipped

with either clean or foul bills of health, as it might happen, and upon its arrival in Britain, after having undergone a very imperfect airing at Standgate Creek, or no airing at all at Carlingford, destined to be distributed to our manufactories!

We again take the liberty of repeating, that Europe in general is under the most serious obligations to Dr. McLean for his having elicited information which was not generally known before, and which, but for his non-contagion ideas, might have been passed over in silence.

: We have always known, that the greatest ignorance of quarantine and quarantine laws prevailed in the United Kingdoms; yet few before this had the opportunity of knowing that this ignorance went to the extent the good Doctor has so kindly shewn us. What reason have the people of England to thank a kind Providence, that in his bounty he has had pity upon them, and so miraculously saved them from the most horrid of all scourges of the human race, the plague. It is true, the people of England have escaped the scorpion lash of the pestilence for a century and a half. Whether or not the diseasé has been in her lazzaretti, we have not the means of judging, as no records have been kept; but if we may judge from the evidence given by the Chiefs of the Sanita Departments of Standgate Creek and Carlingford, and that the

same ignorance and laxity has prevailed during the century and half, we may say, that had the plague been at the quarantine stations, it is more than miraculous that it has not spread amongst the population. Attention to the facts, which we shall state, will abundantly prove, that it has not arisen from non-contagion.

This subject ought most seriously to be taken up by the people of England. A moment's delay is fraught with danger. It is criminal in them, to allow themselves to be deluded by the wild ideas of the visionary. The plague has been in England ; and what has been once may be again.

The last plague which made such ravages in England was in 1665. The Island of Malta was visited by plague in 1675, only ten years after that of England, and it remained free from contagion until 1813. It was prognosticated and foreseen, by those versant in the subject, that Malta would not long escape, after the English became masters of the Island, from the laxity which was allowed to prevail, and from the temerity and irregularities of our ships of war. This was often represented to Government by the mercantile interests, particularly in 1810. Still quarantine was observed at Malta, and her expurgation of the susceptible articles of the Levant and Egypt, was, and is, superior to any sanita in Europe.

The risk which England runs of having the plague introduced, under the present most extraordinary system, as explained by Dr. M'Lean, is as one thousand to one, of that which Malta ran, previously to the contagion of 1813. The cotton of Egypt is a new article, a monopoly in the hands of a Pacha, the viceroy of a country which is never free from plague. This cotton now also goes to England in a compressed state, and no exposure can ever eradicate that virus, miasma, or mucus which may lye concealed in a piece of cotton, compressed into the consistency of a piece of board, until it gets into the hands of the manufacturer, to be teased out and carded for spinning. Let us suppose this to take place at Manchester and Glasgow, from whence a number of coaches take their departure for all parts of the empire ; and, at the rate of eight or ten miles an hour, the contagion may be carried into the remotest parts of the realm, nay even into France, before it has been ascertained at the source from which the malady sprung.

We maintain, that Great Britain can never be safe in receiving the susceptible articles of the Levant, but particularly the cotton of Egypt, until she has proper lazaretti for their depuration, and men at the head of each, of a mode of thinking totally different from Dr. M'Lean. The cottons of Egypt, in a compressed state, can never be

received without the most flagrant risk, even if her lazzeretti and expurgators were superior to the best in any part of Europe; and an oath ought to be imposed on every one employed in sanitary operation, "that he believes in contagion," otherwise some rash non-contagionist, in the heat of his zeal to prove his theory, will let the plague loose on the nation.

That the plague has been communicated by goods, might be proved by thousands of instances, both from ancient history and modern times. We shall here mention some of those instances which have more recently occurred, chiefly in our own possessions.

The plague of 1813 was introduced into Malta, by goods stolen from the ship *St. Nicolas*, in Marsamuscetto Harbour, after her infected crew had been sent into the lazzeretto. The first attack was in the house of a known vender of smuggled articles of this nature, in Valletta. The next was in that of a boatman, whose house was opposite to the place where the *St. Nicolas* lay anchored in Sliema Bay.

Gozo was infected by goods which had been buried, from the breaking out of the disease at Casal Curmi, in Malta, and which, after the vil-

lage was put in pratique with the rest of the Island, were dug up and carried by the proprietor to his family at Gozo. It first showed itself in four families, where the property was seen and handled; and this was only a small casket, with some trinkets laid on cotton—had it been a bale of cotton, not all the exertions and vigilance of Sir Thomas Maitland, would have arrested the disease until thousands had become its victims.

The last plague at Corfu was given from a box or trunk, which a smuggler, named Speraechi, had in one of his exploits, brought over from the opposite coast, where it would appear there existed plague. This box the smuggler deposited with the clerk of a Mr. Polito, having borrowed on it a small sum of money. Speracchi not having returned to redeem his pledge, and there being reason to suppose he had fallen himself a victim to the contagion, after more than twelve months, the clerk opened the box, which was found to contain, amongst other parts of wearing apparel, a quantity of silk handkerchiefs. The day following, this clerk or agent of Mr. Polito was attacked and died. He communicated it to the family of the Primate of the village, Marathia, who with his infant son, fell victims. The daughter also of the Primate, and her husband, who came from the village Cloma, to visit their sick parent, were both attacked on their return home and shortly after died.

The introduction of the plague soon after at Cefalonia, was traced to some wearing apparel, taken from the bodies of two Turks, who were found dead on the road from Arta, where a party of Cefalonists had to embark for their native island. A fellow, named Venturato, who had robbed the dead, kept his spoil wrapped up in his great coat, where it remained until the morning of the day previous to their getting pratique. He immediately was attacked with the contagion ; his illness increased much during the night, but as pratique was to be given to the party next day, he was induced by his comrades to keep his situation a secret from the guardian of health. In this state, he was admitted to pratique, and having with difficulty reached his native village, Comitato, on the same afternoon, expired. This fellow's cousin, on whose arm he had leaned to reach the village, was next attacked, and the contagion spread itself through the neighbourhood.

The plague at Noiia, in the Neapolitan States, was, it is asserted, introduced by goods smuggled from a vessel, which had arrived from Smyrna, or one from the coast of Albania ; but was not traced with the certainty of those which took place in our own possessions.

It would be difficult to ascertain, how many guardians or expurgators have been carried off by

pestilence, during the depuration of susceptible cargoes with foul bills of health. These are secrets which remain prudently in the breasts of those connected with health departments, not to create unnecessary alarm in the country; but it is well known, that plague has been frequently in most, if not all, the regular lazzeretti of Europe. In Malta, we know it has been at least twice, even since that of 1813; but such is the superiority of system, regulation, and intelligence of her officers, that it has never gone beyond the bounds of the place where it first appeared. As it appears by Dr. McLean's exposure of the sanitary establishment of Great Britain, that no records have been kept, it is fair to presume, that the same which has happened in other countries, may also have happened there.

That case, related by Mr. Thomas, President of the board of health at Zante, of the Ionian brig, *St. Spiridione*, is one in point, of a strong and convincing nature, and shows that not only the depurator, but all those assisting him, got the contagion, by exposing to the air infected property. It shows also in a remarkable manner, in the instance of *Giovanni Mescala*, how the human system is not at all times disposed to receive infection; as this man, out of nine, with whom he was in constant contact, not only escaped, but never was affected. This case is of such importance, that we shall copy, verbatim, Mr. Thomas's report. [This ves-

sel had arrived at Zante on the 18th of June, 1819, in sixteen days, from Tunis. “Immediately upon the arrival of the *St. Spiridione* at Zante, from Tunis, agreeably to the rules of quarantine, a guardian belonging to the health office, was placed on board. Soon after this guardian, Giovanni Patrichio, had commenced his ordinary duties, and superintended the opening of the various trunks and packages, belonging to the crew, handling and airing their contents, the whole, with the exception of one person, were attacked with the plague in succession, as inserted in the table, (one on the 23d of June, three on the 24th, one on the 25th, two on the 26th, and one on the 27th.) The symptoms in every case were of the most unequivocal character, accompanied both by buboes and carbuncles.” The most humane means were resorted to by government for the safety of the unfortunate persons thus attacked with plague; and the most decided measures were carried into effect, for the purpose of preventing the possibility of the introduction of contagion into the Island. The consequence was, that this dreadful disease, which committed such dire havoc amongst the limited few, exposed to its influence, was confined to its original source.”

During the contagion at Malta, in 1813, we had many instances of the disease being communicated by touching infected property. We shall

mention one out of many well authenticated. Rosa Vessalli, wife of a guardian, who died of the malady at Bucareara, on the 28th of September, remained at her house with her infant until the 19th November. It now became necessary to remove her, as the depuration of infected houses had reached her dwelling. She, with her child, were of course sent to the clean hospital at St. Veneranda. They had nearly reached the place of their destination, (being between the clean and foul or pest hospitals,) when she began to totter, and it was fortunately discovered in time, that both she and her child were infected; they were therefore carried back to the pest hospital. As this woman and child had remained free of infection, and she declared that she had had no communication with her husband for some time previous to his death; she was permitted to take with her to St. Veneranda, some changes of linen for herself and infant. This linen, it was proved, had been handled some time before by the husband, who had contaminated it; it had however been locked up in a wardrobe for several *months* previous to her removal, and had only been opened the morning of the day in which she and her child were attacked.

Tully, a gentleman, who with all the generous feelings of his countrymen, distinguished himself so much by his philanthropy, science, and exer-

tion during the plague at Corfu and Cefalonia, of which he had the charge, favors us with many instances of a similar nature: we shall select one.

“ A family of the name of Classi from their contiguity to another which had been infected, was removed to the camp destined for those in the second grade of suspicion; for seventeen days the whole family remained in perfect health, every day performing the ablutions which had been prescribed, and undergoing medical inspection, twice every day, for the purpose of detecting disease in the bud, should it unfortunately break out; on the eighteenth morning symptoms of disease were discovered at the medical inspection and in less than twenty four hours, out of seven persons which constituted the family, four offered the most unequivocal signs of plague; another was taken ill the following evening, and notwithstanding every effort for their safety, five of the seven fell victims, with very little respite. It appeared that one of the girls, previous to quitting their home for the camp, had concealed in her dress some cotton, which some days previous she had received from a friend for the purpose of making into thread; and as it escaped the observation of the guardian, immediately after entering the tent, she suspended it from a ring at the upper end of the pole, where it remained unseen and escaped inspection. This cotton was only removed from its

concealment the morning preceding that on which the contagion showed itself in the family, when it was taken down with the utmost confidence without the least suspicion of danger, and divided amongst the females, four in number, to spin for their amusement, all fears of disease being at an end."

These instances, with many others, which occurred at Malta, and the Ionian Islands under the British Government, are well authenticated by living witnesses, and are alone flagrant and irrefragable refutations of the hollow system maintained by the non-contagionist.

Dr. McLean informs us, "that in the course of 159 years 30,000 ships have performed quarantine in the united kingdoms, and, that during that period, there has been no plague, in either the Lazzaretti or Country." This stands on simple assertion, without any thing in the shape of a document to support it; for at the same time he kindly informs us that *no record has been kept* at the quarantine stations. Now this assertion of the Doctor's we are inclined to believe, is a great mis-statement; for we remember in our own times, that some ships from the coast of Africa, we believe, Mogador, were sent out to sea, and there burned, on account of their having plague on board, and as we naturally conclude, that the

people were not destroyed with the property, unless they had already fallen victims, they must have been put into some sort of lazaretto. In this we find we are supported in the evidence given by Dr. Granville before the Committee of the House of Commons.

We are told that 30,000 ships have performed quarantine in England since 1665. Now as we are also told, that no records have been kept, it is rather a puzzle how the Doctor can have ascertained so precisely the number. He would insinuate that these were vessels which might have brought plague ; but with more truth we might assert, that of the 30,000, one in five hundred would exceed the number of those with foul bills of health. It is well known to those versant in such matters, that until about the end of last century, ships, with foul bills of health, were not admitted into England from the Levant, and that during plague at Smyrna, clean bills of health were either surreptitiously procured, by sending ships to Salonica, or some other residence of an agent of the Levant Company, where clean bills could be procured ; or by sending them to Malta, Leghorn, or some other regular quarantine station, where their cargoes might be regularly depurated. We have also occasion to know, that the produce of Egypt rarely, if ever, went directly to England, but through some other channel, such as Malta,

Smyrna, or the free ports of Italy. It is well known also, that it is only within the last three years, that the enterprising Pascha, has raised in his viceroyalty, articles used by the British manufacturer. It is no secret, that one of the chief reasons, why distinct privileges were granted to the free ports in Italy, by our navigation act, was, that we might receive, through their medium, the dangerous articles of infected countries, after having performed quarantine in their lazarettes. Ships, coming from these free ports, brought with them bills of health of an unquestionable character, yet were they, and all ships from within the Streights of Gibraltar, put into a quarantine of observation, until their papers were examined by His Majesty's Privy Council—a wise precaution, because it is, at all times, fair to presume, that His Majesty's Ministers might be in possession of information, respecting the healthy or unhealthy state of different countries, at dates more recent than those borne by the bills of health of merchant ships ; and because, all countries, which are in communication, however guarded, with countries liable to this horrid malady, are subject to its introduction, by some improper means, of which we have but recently had many melancholy examples.

We might not be, perhaps, beyond the mark, if we were to say, that of the 30,000 ships, men-

tioned by Dr. M'Lean, ninety-nine in a hundred, were from countries in which quarantine of observation only had been imposed ; or with fruit cargoes not considered as susceptible, when the length of the voyage is considered.

“ Let us now,” says the Doctor, “enquire into the necessity and operation of quarantine and lazarettos? When we reflect, that 857 vessels, from ninety-one places, near and distant, in all the quarters of the globe, were last year considered proper objects of detention, under the quarantine laws, under various degrees of suspicion of contamination ; and that a proportionate number has been annually detained under similar circumstances, for upwards of a century, we are immediately prompted to enquire, whether all the contagion on board of the 20,000 or 30,000 ships, that must have been thus detained, has not left a single trace, or the record of a single case of sickness, or of death behind it ; and if not, our next enquiry is, how long this detention is to continue as an *experiment*, unproductive of any thing but mischief?”

If your house has not been broken into for a hundred and fifty years, Doctor, is that a reason why your doors should be left unlocked? When you know that your neighbours have had their premises pillaged, and their families put to death

with the most excruciating tortures, will it not be criminal in you to leave your's unguarded? Garrison towns are always prepared against surprise ; why then will you, for any mercantile consideration, attempt to seduce, by false arguments, the sentinels of the public health, to abandon their posts, and run the risk of being surprised, by an enemy, more formidable than Buonaparte and all his armies?

We must here give the Doctor all due credit for the length he allows himself to be transported in support of his ill-founded argument.

It is not our wish or intention to question the veracity or respectability of the Medical Gentlemen, who gave their evidence before the Committee of the House of Commons, in 1824. They only state, to the best of their knowledge, what has occurred at the different quarantine establishments, or stations, in the United Kingdoms, if such a mass of ignorance, want of rule, and principle of action, deserves to be so denominated ; but we feel disposed to believe, that the portion of evidence which is before us, in the lecture delivered at Liverpool, is garbled, and that the questions put to those gentlemen were framed by some non-contagionist, for they are of that insidious nature, that nothing could be elicited by them, to contradict his theory. No records having been

kept, and plague not having come under the observation of those gentlemen in Britain, the questions are so dexterously turned, that they had only to answer to what *they* had actually seen, or what is *said* to have taken place in the United Kingdoms, in their own time.

Dr. Granville could not be tutored to answer according to Dr. M'Lean's wishes ; he, of course, must be turned into ridicule. "This is something like the lawyer," says the Doctor, "who contended there must have been witches, or there would not have been laws made against witchcraft. It would be quite superfluous to offer a single comment on the palpable pertinacity of this witness." Dr. Granville is one who remembered something of the ships which had been destroyed, having plague on board.

Ralph Green, Esq. Inspector of Hospitals, is not aware that he *has ever heard* of any instance in which the expurgators, or any of the persons employed in packing or removing the goods, *in this country*, have been infected.

Mr. Green, was on the Medical Staff, at Malta, when the plague broke out in 1813 ; if we mistake not, he visited the first case which was discovered, in the house of the shoemaker, Borg ; he was also for some years a Member of the Board

of Health ; and had questions been put to him in another shape, than appears to have been the case, the probability is, that he could have remembered some cases in point ; he certainly would have remembered that case, recorded by his friend, Mr. Thomas, of the St. Speridione, at Zante, where the expurgator, and seven of the ship's crew, who assisted him in his operations, not only caught the infection, but died of the disease.

Mr. Sanders, of Stangate Creek, “ does not *recollect* any instance of persons taken ill, or actually ill when they arrived. Does not *recollect* any instance in which the expurgators, who are the persons who examine the goods, have ever been taken ill, in consequence of such examination. During fourteen years he has been superintendant at Standgate Creek, does not recollect an instance.” This evidence puts us much in mind of Signor Non mi Ricordo, who, a few years ago, made a figure in England.

Mr. James M'Neal, of Carlingford, in his lucid evidence, is nearly of a piece with that of Mr. Sanders, wherein he says, “ vessels with foul bills of health, he *understands*, have repeatedly arrived at Carlingford ;” perhaps Mr. James M'Neal is a non-resident inspector, on the Irish establishment.

This Non mi Ricordo and hearsay evidence, is

quite congenial to the feelings of the good Doctor, in the absence of every other, bearing the stamp of record, or air of probability.

We shall proceed with the Doctor. "The mass of evidence here adduced, showing the impossibility of the existence of pestilential contagion in goods from the Levant, if it ever has been equalled, has certainly never been surpassed in consistency and effect, upon any occasion. It appears from the unequivocal and unanimous testimony of witnesses, the most immediately connected with our quarantine establishments, and of respectable medical men, that the expurgators, of goods in the lazarettos of the United Kingdoms, who, if these goods had been impregnated with contagion, could not have remained free from disease, prove to be by far the most healthy persons in the community, no instance being *recorded*, even of an indisposition or head-ache amongst them, unless we admit the solitary case of momentary giddiness, stated by Mr. Sanders."

Now we maintain, that all this mass of evidence, as he calls it, goes only to prove the very perilous situation of Great Britain, and that his theory has not a leg to stand upon.

We have often heard of Caledonians, who have what is called, the second sight, by which they

can take a peep into futurity ; but the Doctor appears to have a gift beyond his second-sighted countrymen, for, like James, he has the power of looking into the past, as well as the future. By the power of simple assertion, in the absence of every species of *record*, he proves, that no contagion has ever been in the quarantine establishments of the United Kingdoms, for a hundred and fifty-nine years, and in strength of his assumption, favours us with the *Non mi Ricordo* testimony of Mr. Sanders, and the *understandings* of Mr. James M'Neal. We feel inclined to treat the Doctor with his own feast of wit, dished up to Dr. Granville, in the shape of the lawyer and the witches—because there has been no pestilence, sweeping the streets of the city of London for the last hundred and fifty-nine years, ergo, there must have been no contagion in the quarantine establishments of the United Kingdom : Ergo again, no existence of pestilential contagion in goods from the Levant.

We shall now, for a moment, leave the Doctor in the enjoyment of the paradise he has made for himself, and enquire what a cotemporary writer, of some merit and undoubted talents, says on the other side of the question. We quote this author most readily, from our thorough knowledge of the man, as well as of the truths he relates. “In all instances,” says Mr. Tully, “where communication

had been cut off, it has been clearly proved, that no danger was known to follow; but where this was not timely effected, and the disease permitted to run an uncontrouled course, its assaults we have seen, have been alike traced to the airy and comfortable habitation, and to the wretched hovel; it made no distinction, in its attack, between the rich proprietor and the poor peasant."

"Plague, to keep it out of a country, although at the very threshold, requires that it should only be treated as plague, subjecting it to the common rules of quarantine; and that upon the plain and simple principle alone, of considering it (what it truly is) contagious, and alone contagious." "It is a disease of a truly extraordinary character, offering, as it does, respectful regard for all public authorities, of every denomination, and every where retreating before the bayonet and badge of authority." "Every one acquainted with the nature of plague, is perfectly aware that the great danger to which we are exposed, from this disease, is, from its frequently creeping upon us unawares, masking its advance, and firmly laying hold of a community before we are at all aware of its existence; and if we examine the particulars of the different plagues that have occurred, and which for centuries past have desolated Europe, we shall find that there is scarcely a case on record, where the plague was not clandestinely in-

troduced ; and, in many instances, where the laws of quarantine have been enforced, with the most scrupulous attention to the public safety."

" Unfortunately, such is the avaricious nature of man, too frequently ready to evade all established laws, for the purpose of a wretched gain, that we are never secure from danger, so long as we are in intercourse with these countries, from whence this scourge is imported." Our author proceeds to say, that " were it not for these establishments, (the quarantine establishments) Europe would soon become a hot bed of disease. It is to these establishments we owe our safety, and the ignorance we have so long been in, as to the nature of this disease ; as our general exemption from the contagion of plague, and consequent want of knowledge of the disease, up to the period of which we are treating, is unquestionably owing to these establishments."

" It is a well known fact, that Egypt has, for centuries back, been a scourge to Europe. But it is not the Christian part of Europe alone that have suffered from the commercial intercourse with Egypt." " Constantinople, and even Smyrna, owe disease to the self same source ; during those periods, when all communication between Constantinople and Egypt had been cut off, the former was totally free from plague, and the same excep-



tion, arising from the same cause, was also noticed at Smyrna."

"It is evident, that, as the state of cultivation in Egypt has declined, so has disease continued to advance; and as our intercourse, with that country, has of late years been enlarged, so has our danger encreased; nor will it be too much to assert, that in its present impoverished state, disease may be considered as ever abroad, and the nature of our commerce, as well as the peculiarly susceptible produce of that soil, naturally renders all our communications, with whatsoever jealousy guarded, hazardous, beyond all former periods; and this state of danger does not apply to ourselves alone, but to Europe in general, every port being open, and every flag unfurled, in carrying on trade with that dangerous country."

At the time Tully wrote, the cottons of Egypt were unknown in a British market, or, we may with safety say, any, where else. We submit it to His Majesty's Ministers, the guardians of the public, and to that public itself, whether or not, under the existing circumstances, as we see exposed by Dr. M'Lean, the dangerous cotton of Egypt, ought to be received into England, before it has performed quarantine in some well appointed lazaretto.

The cultivation of cotton goes on increasing, and in proportion as it increases, so increases also the misery of the people. All authors, who have recently written upon that interesting country, agree in stating, that they have never seen a more abject and poverty-struck race in any country, than the peasantry of Egypt; and as the avarice and avidity of the Pacha increases with his riches, so increases the misery of the lower part of his subjects.

In all our own experience and reading, we have never been able to trace one solitary instance of the plague getting into a country, through people or merchandize, which have been put under regular quarantine. Tully says, "It is not in lazaretti that we are to look for danger; these are our only securities, and when contaminated goods produce disease, in the common course of expurgation, relaxed indeed must be the discipline, if evil arises to the public from the process." Since the contagion, in 1813, at Malta, the plague has been more than once in the quarantine harbour and lazaretti, without creating the smallest alarm to either the Government or the people; trusting, with the most implicit confidence, in the well-digested regulations of the health department, and the intelligence and vigilance of its officers.

To return to Dr. M'Lean on the depuration of

merchandize.—Not quite satisfied with the evidence of Dr. Granville, which did not answer his purpose, he observes, “ this witness in 1819, in his evidence, says, that the contagious matter of the plague may remain in goods, in a state to communicate the disease for many months, and that neither 154 years, nor even six or seven centuries can give a hope that it cannot exist in Great Britain.” In his evidence in 1824, the same gentleman says, “ taking a passage from Smyrna of twenty days, when contagion exists in the place, and supposing no accident to have occurred during the passage, he would consider 40 days more to be quite sufficient, including the probationary airings. Now if contagion can remain in goods for *many months*, and an interval of 154 *years*, or six or seven centuries, can be no guarantee that it will not be imported, upon what grounds does this witness, in his evidence, in 1824, recommend quarantine on ships, with foul bills of health, to be diminished from 60 to 40 days, including probationary airings; whilst if his own principles were correct, it ought to be interminably lengthened.”—This we conceive culpable perversion of language. Dr. Granville, in his first evidence, says, “ the contagious matter may remain in goods in a state to communicate the disorder for many months,” had he said years he would still have been correct; on this he is

borne out by practical knowledge, and almost every author who has written on the subject.

We have shewn that the plague was communicated to Gozo, by a small casket, with some cotton, which had been under ground for several months; and have shewn that the plague was introduced into Corfu from a box or trunk, which had not been unlocked for upwards of twelve months. We have before us a well authenticated fact of the plague breaking out in a most respectable family at Scio, from a servant girl ripping open a cushion filled with sheeps wool, *seven* years after the plague had been at that island; and if we thought it necessary, we could adduce many proofs of the same nature for a greater number of years. But though it is well known that the contagious matter may remain dormant in goods, which have for years been closely *shut up*, yet it does not follow that if they had been *exposed* to the free action of the air for 40 days, they would not have been completely freed from every species of contagious virus. It is even believed that the virus becomes more infectious and more virulent from being for a length of time shut up. In this Dr. Granville is borne out by the custom and experience of every sanita in Europe; though some of them keep goods in quarantine a greater number of days, considering the health of the state to be paramount to the inconvenience occasioned to the merchant.

The second answer of Dr. Granville appears to us, to have no relation whatever to the first—here, he says, “neither 154 years, nor six or seven centuries can give a hope, that it, the contagion of plague, cannot exist in Britain.” No person in his sound mind, acquainted with the subject, would ever challenge such an answer, unless to serve some wild purpose, for it is sound and directly to the point. England it is true has escaped plague, but will any man, unbiased, after reading the alarming exposé, contained in the lecture of Dr. McLean, of the evidence given by the chiefs of the quarantine stations, before the committee of the House of Commons, believe, that it is probable or even likely that she will much longer escape, unless some strong measures are forthwith adopted. England has had the plague, and neither 154 years, nor six or seven centuries ought to engender a hope that she is beyond the liability to take it again.

The doctor admits that the plague which raged in England 159 years ago, was the same which exists by that name in the Levant, but denies its importation from Turkey, and affirms that there is an abundance of evidence, that the plague frequently prevailed in this country, in the 13th and 14th centuries, when there was no intercourse, direct or indirect, between it and Turkey. We consider it to be no small point conceded, to acknowledge, that

the plague, which desolated the streets of London in 1665, was the same, which, in the present day, desolates those of Grand Cairo. We are told by De Foe, from one who was an eye witness of the plague in 1665, that it was imported from Holland—and the Dutch, we know, had direct intercourse with the Levant, at the period alluded to. What then comes of the assertion, that we had no intercourse at that period, direct or indirect, with Turkey? Our intercourse with the Levant, it is true, was but limited and indirect, in the early ages, with regard to merchandize. Our commerce was in its childhood; but many of the articles produced in the Levant, were used in England, before the days mentioned; and we find our Sovereigns and Nobles engaged in the crusades, in times more remote than the non-contagionist appears inclined to remember. If the plague, which raged in London, in 1665, was the same, as confessed by the great non-contagionist, which, at the present day, sweeps the streets of Cairo, and other parts of the Levant, the effects of it in a northern climate must be more dreadful; arising, we presume, from the robust constitution, and very different mode of life of the inhabitants. We shall give a few passages from the work of De Foe, which will prove this to those who have seen the plague in the Levant—the delirium there arising from the fever, and not from the pains of the buboes and carbuncles.

“ In my walks, I have many dismal scenes before my eyes, particularly of people falling dead in the streets, terrible shrieks and screeches of women, who, in their agonies, would throw open their chamber windows, and cry out in a dismal surprising manner. Passing through Tokenhouse Yard, in Lothbury, a casement violently opened just over my head, and a woman gave three frightful screeches, and then cried, Oh! Death! Death! Death! in a most inimitable tone, which struck me with horror, and a chillness in my very blood. It is scarcely credible what dreadful cases happened in particular families every day. People, in the rage of the distemper, or in the torment of their swellings, which was indeed intolerable, running out of their own government, raving and distracted; and sometimes laying violent hands upon themselves, throwing themselves out at their windows, and mothers murdering their own children, in their lunacy; some dying of mere grief as a passion; some of mere fright and surprise, without any infection at all; others frightened into idiotism and foolish distractions; some into despair and lunacy; others into melancholy madness. The pain of the swelling was, in particular, very violent, and to some intolerable. The swellings, in some, grew hard, and they applied violent drawing plasters, &c. to break them. In some, those swellings were made hard, partly by the force of the distemper, and partly by their being too

violently drawn, and even so hard, that no instrument could cut them. And then they burnt them with caustics, so that many died raving mad. It often pierced my very soul to hear the groans and cries of those who were thus tormented."

We shall now untwine another argument of the Doctor's, "let us enquire," says he, "if pestilential contagion did exist, and were capable of being retained in goods *for years*, or any *indefinite period*, whether any advantage could reasonably be expected to be derived from a quarantine of twenty, forty, sixty, or any number of days, that should not exceed, in duration, the indefinite number here assumed, whatever that may be? whether a detention of this kind must not be wholly insufficient for its proposed ends, and a perfectly gratuitous injury to commercial operations?"

Dr. Prim is of opinion, "that contagion may be enveloped in goods, particularly cotton, for a considerable time, of which it is impossible to judge." He speaks correctly; contagious matter most certainly may lie in goods, particularly cotton, if kept close packed; yet, if properly exposed to the air for a definite time, and regularly depurated, as at Malta, and some other of the best regulated lazzeretti, no risk will be run. As to what that definite time ought to be, doctors differ. Some say twenty,

some forty, others sixty days. We are of opinion that forty days are required as a perfect quarantine, provided always that the goods are perfectly exposed, and regularly turned to the free action of the air ; but we maintain that no exposure, short of teasing out and beating the cottons of Egypt, when imported in a compressed state, can render them safe to be divided out to the manufacturer.

Tully says, “ that it has been proved beyond a doubt, that susceptible effects, of whatever texture, and however impregnated with pestilential virus, can be securely purified by subjecting them to the combined action, or even individual action, of pure air and water ; and the more readily, when immersion is followed up by exposure to the all-powerful influence of certain degrees of heat. This was ascertained by actual proofs both at Corfu and Cefalonia, but more especially at the latter Island ; and the period necessary for the purification of contaminated goods was found to be extremely limited under these processes. At Cefalonia, the tents which had been employed in our plague camps, after the simple process of being washed half a dozen times in salt water, and dried in the sun, were subsequently delivered by me into his Majesty’s stores, and soon after employed in the encampment of the garrison. Previous to our being thoroughly satisfied that this process would prove effectual, many articles

of this description, from a sense of danger, had been destroyed."

"On the principle that infected articles may become thoroughly purified within a very few days, when fully subjected to the effects of either of the active agents above mentioned, it will be admitted, that every bale of goods received into a public lazaretto must, with proper attention, be early freed from all danger, or that, if any exists, it will speedily declare itself. It is presumed, of course, that accurate attention is paid by the persons destined to manage or purify such effects, subjected to quarantine. This admitted, we are perfectly authorised to conclude, that under strict and efficient means, the actual state of the most extensive cargoes of susceptible goods can be ascertained within fourteen days."

Again :—"If the effects under lazarette discipline are duly looked after, and the common established regulations rigidly enforced, there can be no question of the efficacy, under the most suspicious circumstances, of an expurgation extended to twenty-one days."

We have the greatest deference to the opinion of our friend Tully; no one has had greater experience, or better opportunity of judging than he had; but we cannot implicitly subscribe to the

idea of turning goods of the first grade of susceptibility, and with foul bills of health, over to the *pratique* side of the barrier, after so short a period of depuration. We presume, however, he means twenty-one days after the last bale has been opened thoroughly, and by the depurators. On a cargo of 1000 bales of cotton, packed in the ordinary way, twenty-one days is hardly sufficient for the ripping open and dividing of the bales : then allowing fourteen days to elapse for the disease to display itself, and only five for re-conditioning of the bags, forty days of quarantine will have been performed : when we say forty days, we are borne out, both by experience and practice, in all the best lazzeretti in Europe.

A plurality of depurators in all cases is recommended, and for the best of reasons : one expurgator may have had the plague, and not be liable to fresh infection ; or the system of the depuration may not be disposed to absorb the poison, which is not so likely to happen when more than one is employed. The depurators are the touchstones by which we are to judge whether or not contagious virus is to be found in the goods they are expurgating ; and too much attention cannot be paid to see that they do their duty, when so much is at stake !

The mode of depurating cotton at Malta is the

best to be found in any of the sanitas of Europe, and no where is it better understood, both from experience and observation; and though every advantage to commerce is studied by the Government, yet has it too great a regard for the public health to diminish the quarantine on goods of the first class below what is calculated to be requisite, and that is forty days.

Dr. M'Lean says—"This is not a technical question, but one on which every person of common sense and ordinary education is as competent to judge as any physician."

We assent to this, with the exception, that there is a difference between experience and inexperience. The man who has lived in plague countries, and known its fatal and appalling effects, is certainly more competent to judge than he who has not. And I cannot help thinking, that, with experience so slight as that of Dr. M'Lean, it is the extreme of rashness to endeavour to persuade the people of Great Britain to act on a theory, which, to say the least, must be considered as yet unproved, to run the risk of plunging this country, nay, every country in Europe, into disease and despair. Had the humane Doctor, when he was at Constantinople, attempted to persuade the Divan that self-preservation was not more contrary to the Koran, by the adoption of quarantine,

than by running out of a house when on fire, or pulling down those in the vicinity, to prevent its spreading, he would have undertaken a more meritorious work ; and, had he succeeded, he would have been almost adored by infidel as well as Christian.

The manufacturers of Great Britain are obliged to Dr. McLean, for his very patriotic fears in regard to the rivalry from our neighbours, the French, on account of the Pascha's cotton being made to perform quarantine in England. And in consonance with his views we suggest, that our quarantine on that article be made to assimilate with that of Marseilles ; the moment the sanitas of Europe remove their restrictions on this dangerous article, let us do the same, but not until then. We are not afraid to take the field against our rivals, whether with the manufactures of Birmingham or Manchester in our hands, thanks to our superiority in every respect ; and we can see neither reason nor necessity for our risking the health of the country to accomplish it.

But the Doctor, in all his liberal and extended ideas, displayed apparently for the introduction of the Egyptian cotton, has totally in his zeal lost sight of the health, quiet, and comfort of the people of England ; and with all due deference to his enlightened ideas and profound policy, we presume to consider it paramount to every other

interest. It is this which induced us to write on this subject; and we consider it to be one of the most vital importance, and in accordance with every public and private feeling. The welfare of our native land, though long and far removed from her, is dear to us by remembrance, and by every tender tie. It is the cause of humanity we attempt to advocate in opposition to doctrines of the most dangerous tendency, supported by sophistry and assertion, without one single fact to sustain them, and in complete contradiction to what experience and custom have warranted in every part of Europe.

We again repeat, that the cottons of Egypt ought not to be received directly into England until she has Lazzaretti and sanitary establishments equal to the first in Europe for its expurgation; that, that expurgation ought not to be less than it is in the most rigorous of sanitas; and, lastly, that these cottons ought, on no account, to be admitted in a state of compression. Without this the pestilence will visit the sacred land of Britain; and then, under the recollections of the dismal scenes I have witnessed, would I lift up my voice and say, "Let them which are in Judea flee to the mountains, and let them which are in the midst of it depart out; and let not them which are in the countries enter thereunto—for *these be the days of vengeance!*"

